



Via ECFS

August 22, 2019

Ms. Marlene H. Dortch
Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20554

Re: Notice of Ex Parte Communications
Authorizing Permissive Use of the "Next Generation" Broadcast Television Standard, GN Docket No. 16-142; and

Amendments to Part 11 of the Commission's Rules Regarding the Emergency Alert System, PS Docket No. 15-94; and Improving Wireless Emergency Alerts and Community-Initiated Alerting, PS Docket No. 15-91

Dear Ms. Dortch:

On August 19, 2019, John Lawson and Gail Fenkell of the AWARN Alliance met with Commissioner Michael O'Rielly to provide an update on the Advanced Warning and Response Network (AWARN), which utilizes the ATSC 3.0, Next Generation Television ("Next Gen TV") broadcast transmission standard.

As one of the original joint petitioners for Next Gen TV approval, Lawson, the AWARN Alliance Executive Director, expressed his gratitude on behalf of the Alliance members for Commissioner O'Rielly's continued support for the voluntary transmission of Next Gen TV and advanced alerting by local broadcasters.

As part of a progress report, Lawson described the evolution of the user experience (UX) design for AWARN advanced emergency alerts using Next Gen TV. The design was developed with input from emergency managers and other public safety officials from multiple jurisdictions, who met last fall in workshops/focus groups in Riverside, California, Maricopa County, Arizona, and New York City. Collectively, the participants were responsible for disseminating alerts to over 40 million people.

The resulting UX has been utilized for alerting use cases produced in association with

News-Press & Gazette Company’s KEYT-TV in Santa Barbara, California and the Santa Barbara County Office of Emergency Management. The scenarios are based on an actual "debris flow" event on February 2-3 that forced a mandatory evacuation and closed the 101 Highway. The new UX and use cases were demonstrated at the NAB Show 2019 in April and have been used in subsequent technical interoperability testing.

Lawson briefed the Commissioner on the Alliance’s expanded mission to develop a voluntary framework for on-going emergency news and information after an alert is issued. Lawson also discussed ATSC 3.0 alerting’s potential as a tool for localized emergency alerts for streaming media, which is the subject of recent legislation, and potential synergies between AWARN and Wireless Emergency Alerts. In addition, he described the importance of greater visibility for the voluntary AWARN mission in expanding the membership base of the Alliance.

Please contact the undersigned should you have any questions regarding this matter.

Sincerely,

/s/

John M. Lawson
Executive Director
AWARN Alliance
106 North Lee Street
Alexandria, VA 22314

Cc: Erin A. McGrath